

STREET SMART

April 3, 2002

Governments
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Working Together

Meeting Summary of the SANBAG Board of Directors

San Bernardino Associated Governments ■ 472 N. Arrowhead Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92401 ■ (909) 884-8276
www.sanbag.ca.gov

■ SANBAG working to resolve funding shortage

A shortage of state funds may delay transportation improvements across California, including two high profile freeway projects in San Bernardino County.

SANBAG staff members reported to the Board of Directors last month that the California Transportation Commission announced a \$2 billion "mismatch" between funding requests by transportation agencies statewide and the money available in the 2002-2007 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). CTC staff members have proposed that funds sought in the early years of the five-year STIP cycle be delayed until the later years, when additional funds are available.



SANBAG is awaiting word from the California Transportation Commission about the funding of eastern portions of State Route 210.

During the past three weeks, SANBAG staff have been working with CTC and Caltrans staff to avoid a shift of \$205 million to 2007, the last year of the funding cycle. This shift would create a three-year delay in the completion of State Route 210 through Rialto and San Bernardino and the widening of Interstate 215 in San Bernardino. The current schedule calls for Route 210 to be completed in 2006 and Interstate 215 in 2009. A three-year delay would hamper congestion relief, regional and national goods movement and economic development, Board members fear.

The CTC is set to vote on the funding package on April 4, following public testimony the afternoon of April 3. SANBAG representatives will speak to the commissioners about the negative effect the delay would have on the county's and the region's transportation network.

Board members adopted a resolution at their April 3 meeting to express "grave concerns" about the possible shift in funding and to ask the commission to move forward the year of funding to allow both projects to stay on schedule.

The Board further agreed that if earlier funding for both projects is not possible now, SANBAG would ask the CTC to adopt a "State Route 210 Advancement Plan" developed by SANBAG, CTC and Caltrans staff. This plan would provide early funding to allow State Route 210 -- which is ready to begin construction in nine months -- to stay on schedule. Staff from the three agencies then would continue to explore funding options for Interstate 215 to enable construction to begin as planned in 2004. See page 2 for a detailed look at the 210 and 215 projects.

■ Most residents pleased with Inland Empire life, survey says

Life keeps getting better and better in San Bernardino and Riverside counties, according to results of the 2001 Inland Empire Annual Survey, released to the Board of Directors April 3.

Of those surveyed, 71.9% of San Bernardino County residents and 81.2% of Riverside County residents said that their counties are very good or fairly good places to live, up from 63.2% and 75.9% who gave the counties favorable ratings five years ago.

Residents of both counties praised the location, climate and affordable housing. Riverside County residents cited smog, traffic and drugs as their top three concerns; San Bernardino County residents listed smog, crime/gang activity and drugs as their greatest woes; traffic ranked fourth.

Fear of being a victim of a serious crime dropped substantially from five years ago: 29% of the residents in both counties combined reported being fearful, compared to 42% in 1997.

In San Bernardino County, a significant number of residents are using Measure I-funded projects, including the I-10 carpool lanes, the newly opened segment of Route 210 and Bear Valley Road in the Victor Valley. About 68% said they would favor continuing the Measure I transportation sales tax.

Down the Road ...

- Apr. 10: Administrative Committee, 9 a.m.; SCRRRA Delegates Briefing, 11 a.m.
- Apr. 17: Plans & Programs Committee, 12 noon
- Apr. 19: Mountain-Desert Committee, 9 a.m.
- Apr. 24: SCRRRA Delegates Briefing, 8:30 a.m.

Measure I provides major funding for upcoming freeway projects State Route 210, Interstate 215 among projects slated for Measure I funding

When it comes to freeway projects in San Bernardino County, Measure I really makes a difference in transportation funding. More than half -- 53% -- of the half-cent sales tax revenue allocated in the valley portion of San Bernardino County is spent on freeways and interchanges. This amounts to about \$269 million during the first 10 years of the measure.

This month's issue of "Measuring Success" takes a look at two upcoming freeway projects that will be funded in part by Measure I: the extension of State Route 210 through Rialto and San Bernardino and the widening of Interstate 215 in San Bernardino. While the state's portion of this funding is in some danger of being delayed (see page 1), SANBAG and Caltrans is continuing with the design of these freeways and is working to help the projects stay on schedule.

Extension of State Route 210 -- Rialto and San Bernardino

Amidst great fanfare last summer, SANBAG and Caltrans opened a six-mile section of the new State Route 210 in Rancho Cucamonga and Fontana. Construction is underway on an additional 14 miles of freeway from Rancho Cucamonga westward -- approximately nine miles in San Bernardino County and five miles in Los Angeles County. This 14-mile stretch is due to open to drivers this fall.

Next on the schedule is continued construction to the east of Fontana through the cities of Rialto and San Bernardino. This final eight miles will complete the 28-mile freeway project. The new freeway has a number of associated benefits:

- an alternative to the highly congested Interstate 10,
- the ability to stimulate economic development,
- improved air quality due to less traffic congestion and
- carpool lanes to encourage ridesharing

Freeway access will be provided at Alder, Ayala, Riverside and Pepper avenues in Rialto, and at State Street in San Bernardino. A pedestrian bridge will be built at Lilac Avenue in Rialto for school children and other walkers.

SANBAG is coordinating with the City of Rialto and City of San Bernardino regarding other local street improvements needed as part of the freeway project. Several storm drain projects, the realignment of Highland Avenue and the extension of State, Pepper and Alder all are planned.

The current schedule is based on the assumption that funding will be secured in the early years of the 2002-2007 State Transportation Improvement Program. SANBAG and Caltrans are scheduled to begin construction in late 2002 or early 2003, with completion set for 2006.



Plans call for Interstate 215 to be widened to include a carpool lane both northbound and southbound for six miles through San Bernardino.

Widening of Interstate 215 -- San Bernardino

Plans are underway to widen a six-mile stretch of Interstate 215 both northbound and southbound through the City of San Bernardino. The project will include a new carpool lane and possibly an additional "mixed-flow" lane in both directions. Construction will extend from north of Interstate 10 to connect with State Route 30.

In addition to the benefits outlined at left, this project has two other notable features. The design will improve safety with an overhaul of the existing fast lane entrances and exits. These will be converted to more traditional diamond interchanges, with entrances and exits in the slow lane. The new design also will provide better access to both sides of San Bernardino. Current access to the western portion of the city is restricted from the freeway, forcing drivers to make a series of left-hand turns.

Caltrans will be the lead agency for the construction of this project. Construction on some segments will begin as scheduled, whether or not all funding has been secured. Work should start in 2004 and be completed by 2009.

